

The Cheerful Letter

Every place a church; every day the Lord's day; all events blessings; all joy thanksgiving; and all nature and life full of Good.—James Freeman Clarke.

Vol. XLVI

JUNE, 1937

No. 1

"FORGIVE US OUR DEBTS, AS WE FORGIVE OUR DEBTORS"

There is no real difference in meaning between this form of the prayer and the version: "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us." In old Jewish thought, to trespass against a person, to infringe upon his rights and do him an injury, was to become in debt to him, under obligation to repay him for the harm done. And there is much to be said for that point of view. If I have harmed some one it is not enough for me to be sorry, or even to tell him that I am sorry, I am under obligation to try to repair the damage I have done. If I have robbed him I must repay what I have stolen, and compensate him for the inconvenience and trouble I have caused. When Jesus entered the home of Zacchaeus the tax-gatherer, at Jericho, he was much pleased because Zacchaeus said to him: "If I have wrongfully exacted aught of any man, I restore unto him fourfold."

The only trouble with this point of view is that we find our debts greater than we can pay. Our generation has learned that a war can cause more damage than reparations can repair. A man who loses his temper with a hammer in his hand, can destroy in a few moments more property than he can pay for in a lifetime. What satisfaction can a murderer give that will pay for the life he has taken?

A slander may do more harm than any amount of good speaking can repair. And if we have wasted an opportunity given to us, if through ignorance or carelessness you and I have used powers not for good but for evil, what is there that we can do which will really make things right?

Our hope then is in the miracle of for-

giveness, in the possibility that our debts can be erased. Jesus teaches that God is willing to do just that for us, is willing to wipe away the debts we cannot pay, if we will do the same for other men in their obligations to us. The New Testament parable on forgiveness is the parable of the merciful Lord whose servant owes him the great fortune of ten thousand talents, and who, when the servant cannot pay him, orders him into prison and his family sold. But when the servant begs for mercy, the Lord, we are told, has compassion on him, and forgives him the debt. Then that servant, who has been forgiven so great a debt, finding a man who owes him a paltry sum of a few shillings which he cannot pay at once, despite his entreaties throws him into jail. When the Lord hears of this he is very angry, and says to the servant: "Thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all that debt, because thou besoughtest me: shouldst not thou also have had mercy on thy fellow servant, even as I had mercy on thee?"

Always the New Testament insists that there is this inescapable connection between our attitude toward other men and God's attitude toward us. We live in what is apparently a world of relentless cause and effect, act and consequence, debt and punishment. In that world there is for us, in the end, no hope. But there is also another very wonderful world of love and mercy, a world in which intentions and regrets and repentance have effect, a world in which miracles of forgiveness and reconciliation do occur. We can live in that higher, happier world if we will. But if we are to live in it we must live in it with consistency: we must draw upon its mercies not for ourselves alone, but for others as well.

Paul expected, on one of his trips

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through Greece, to make two visits to the Corinthian Church, one on the way over and one returning. But word came to him that a member of that Church was living in open violation of the Christian code of conduct, and Paul wrote urging the Corinthians to take the sinner to task, and stating that he would omit his visit. Later he explained that he had written that letter not in anger but in tears, not because he did not want to see them, but because he could not bear to visit them in sorrow and bring sadness to those upon whom he depended for his joy. The Corinthians answered that they had taken the sinner to account, that he had confessed his fault, and they wondered what more they should do. Immediately Paul was concerned, not for them, but for the man. He urged them to forgive him, and comfort him, lest he be "swallowed up with his overmuch sorrow." Once a fault was acknowledged and left behind Paul's only concern was for reconciliation.

That is the way it always is with the saintly soul. I remember the account Baron von Hugel tells of a military captain who after being especially devoted to his men, was one day shot and mortally wounded by one of them. The officer spent the last weeks of his life in a finally successful effort to win that man, who had killed him, away from his bitterness to a renewed trust and affection.

Or we think of the New Testament parable of the Prodigal Son. The point of that story is the difference in attitude between the father and the elder brother. The prodigal was a poor sort, certainly he is not to be imitated. But the elder brother, a good man, was trustworthy, dependable, loyal; only he could not rise

into the father's higher world of love and forgiveness and joy.

Can we live in that higher world? Our faith assures us that every one of us can know the joy of new, clean, fresh beginnings. If we will give encouragement to others when they depend upon us for it, then we shall find encouragement for ourselves in our need. If we let go of the things they owe to us, we shall find lifted the burden of our own debts.

I think of the counsel which comes to us from St. Francis de Sales, a French saint of the eighteenth century. In his "Introduction to the Devout Life" he has one chapter on "Gentleness to Others," and then he follows it with another on "Gentleness to Ourselves." The order is sound. For it is as we learn to be patient and merciful to others that we receive patience and mercy for our own souls. St. Francis insists that, if we are gentle toward others, God will encourage us not to be too harsh with ourselves. "For myself, if I had a great desire not to fall into the sin of vanity, and if, notwithstanding, I had fallen deeply into it, I would not seek to reprove my heart in this manner: 'Art thou not miserable and abominable, that after so many resolutions thou hast suffered thyself to be carried away by vanity? Die of shame, raise no more thy eyes to heaven, blind, shameless that thou art, traitor and disloyal to thy God!' and such like things; but I would rather reprove it in a reasonable and compassionate manner: 'Well! my poor heart, here we are, fallen into the ditch which we had made so firm a resolution to avoid; ah! let us arise and leave it for ever; let us implore the mercy of God and trust that it will help us to be more steadfast in the future, and let us place ourselves again on the path of humility; courage! henceforth let us be more on our guard, God will help us.'"

Even when we must be severe with ourselves, he urges us to end by giving our hearts some comfort . . . "after the example of that great penitent who, seeing his soul afflicted, raised it up in this manner: 'Why art thou cast down, O my soul, and why art thou disquieted within me? Hope

thou in God, for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God.' ”

Let us pray.

Give us strength, our Father, to leave the past behind us, to forgive the mistakes both of others and of ourselves, to trust ourselves in all things to that love which can lift us into new hope and, through us, can bless our world. And to Thee shall we give the praise and the glory forever. Amen.

—REV. FRANK O. HOLMES.

A NEW INSECT PUZZLE

There are air-breathing insects which apparently are able to live for months under water without rising to the surface.

The Smithsonian Institution has just received what has been described as a new species of these strange animals, found in cold, rapid brooklets flowing through dark laurel thickets in the Great Smoky Mountains.

The group now numbers about sixty species in North America, but the way of life is so obscure that they are little known, even by professional entomologists. They have no common name. To quote a press release from the Smithsonian:

“These creatures are beetles. How they are able to endure for such long periods under water is a persistent puzzle, Smithsonian entomologists say. The adults show no special breathing mechanism which is not possessed by beetles which spend all their existence in the free air and to whom any extended immersion would no doubt be fatal.

“They have no gills, so far as can be ascertained, by which oxygen can be extracted from water. The larvæ of many aquatic insects have gills.

“It is possible that even these creatures have them in the larval stage. No trace of them, however, can be found in adults.

“Like some other beetles, they carry a reservoir of air under their wing covers, but this would hardly be sufficient to last

for any extended period when the air-breathing insect was shut off from any other source of oxygen.

“Whatever may be the breathing secret of the beetles, it is considered a remarkable adaptation of life to environment in the animal kingdom.

“One plausible explanation advanced is that the creatures are so inactive that a very little oxygen is sufficient to keep them alive for an indefinite period.

“They move very slowly. The process of metabolism presumably goes on at a very low level.”

Here are some other facts about these interesting insects:

“Like other beetles these creatures go through three major stages: larva, pupa, and adult. They are hatched under water and go through the larval stage of their existence there. There is a possibility that the pupating stage is passed in moist débris at the edges of the water. In any event, the one occasion in their lives when these beetles are definitely known to come into the free air, the Smithsonian entomologists say, is on a dispersal flight undertaken immediately after their transformation from pupæ to adults.

“These flights often take place at night. Those insects which survive it immediately return to the water again where they lay their eggs and spend the rest of their lives. Individuals captured during the dispersal flight do not show evidence of having been in the water. One pupa, found under the bark of a drift log in the Potomac River, was hatched in the Smithsonian under the same conditions of moisture required for the hatching of free-air beetles.

“These water-beetles are quite specific in their dwelling-places. Some kinds live only on the pebbles at the bottom of shallow moving water; some demand cold, swift-running brooks, and some demand warmer, sluggish water. Some live exclusively on logs. Some are river animals. Each species seems to be especially adapted to a peculiar kind of water condition.”

—*Literary Digest.*

CORRESPONDENTS AND APPEALS

Letters should be addressed to Mrs. Laura M. Hurst, 78 Penfield Street, Roslindale, Mass.

Persons writing to the Department for the first time should ask for an enrollment blank and give as reference the name and address of their minister.

When a correspondent moves to a new address, notice should be sent to Headquarters, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass., and to those persons who have been sending letters and reading matter.

It is necessary to state positively that the Cheerful Letter Exchange is not a "clothing bureau" and not a "charitable" society in the usual sense of the word.

It is contrary to the rules of the Cheerful Letter Exchange to allow any one to make use of its magazine by addressing letters asking for money, clothing, or other articles, to those whose names are printed in the paper. This prohibition includes requests to borrow money and the offering of articles for sale. The name of any person who disobeys this rule will be dropped from the list, and any one who receives a request of this description is desired by the Central Committee to return no answer, but to enclose the letter at once to the Chairman of this Department.

Many people do care for just the kind of friendly service for which we are organized. We limit our efforts to them and their wishes.

CHEERFUL LETTER CHAIRMEN

The Department calls attention to a waiting list of *regular correspondents*. Consequently no new ones are printed this month. Here is a chance for new chairmen to adopt a shut-in, or an old chairman to interest new workers. Please write to Mrs. Hurst if you wish a name, and indicate the age desired. Writing Cheerful Letters has been the primary interest of the Exchange since its beginning. In several cases, the monthly letter is the only friendly and educational contact that a CHEERFUL LETTER family has. More letter writers are needed!

Persons subscribing regularly to the Magazine are asked to please recommend the paper to any friends or CHEERFUL LETTER workers. All members actively engaged in the work should subscribe to the Magazine, or have same done for her by her branch.

This is a good time of year to send all the reading material possible. Many of our members are busy with farm work during the coming months and material along this line is most invigorating after a long day's work outside. Plan to send a copy of your daily paper once a week.

New workers are urged to get in touch with this Department with any questions pertaining to the Department of Correspondents and Appeals. How to get a *regular correspondent*?—How to get a rural school?—The difference between a Correspondent and an Appeal, etc.

APPEALS

These Appeals need not be answered a second time and we ask you not to take them as a *regular correspondent* no matter how appealing the acknowledgment is for the package. For any exception please address this Department.

1. Mrs. Clara Ingram, B. 275, Ansonville, N. C., is a lonely widow, getting along in years and not able to get out

much. She would appreciate a whole lot some quilt pieces and odds of thread to help pass away the lonesome hours.

2. I am on the lookout for used folders and cards for any occasion—Christmas, Birthday, Get Well, Congratulations, etc. These are used in making small scrap-folders to send to folks on special celebrations. Any contributions will be a big help and bring a cheery thought to many others. Bernice U. Peavey, B 53, Brooks,

Me. (The writer is a regular correspondent, but desires a larger amount than one branch can send.)

3. Mrs. Kittie Turner, R. 2, Stuart, Va., has been a member of the Exchange for 14 years. Just recently she has become confined to her bed with a serious lung trouble. Never before has she had so much spare time on her hands and she is desirous of some good reading, yarn and crochet materials.

4. We live 35 miles to the nearest railroad town and are surrounded by mountains. All spring it has been cold and foggy which has kept our family of eight housed until we are most desperate for a change of scenery. During this time my little baby was taken from our midst by pneumonia. My six children, ages $1\frac{1}{2}$ to 17 years, hope the CHEERFUL LETTER Exchange will remember them with reading and picture cards and I look forward to sewing materials. Please try to cheer us just a little bit. Mrs. Carl Russell, Dabney, Ark.

5. Mrs. Lillie A. Rakes, Ferrum, Va., is 63 years old with several grown children. She and her husband are unable to work so would enjoy some good reading. Needle work would also come in handy. They cannot get to Church because of the great distance so perhaps reading matter of a religious nature would help to pass away the Blue Sundays.

6. I have three children, a girl of 4 years, and two boys, ages 9 and 11. We have had lots of sickness this winter and I am just convalescing from a hospital experience. We have to rent our ground to make our crops and, believe me, it is hard going. I suppose other folks find living just as hard as we do, and I don't know what we would do without the CHEERFUL LETTER to find its way to our mail box. Light sewing or quilt scraps would be appreciated and the two boys would be so pleased with school materials, even at this time of the year. The little girl would love some second-hand toys or pictures. Mrs. Thomas J. Powers, Lansing, N. C.

7. Mrs. Pansy Moore, R. 1, Asheville, N. C., writes that she is in need of a little

CHEERFUL LETTER help. "Grateful is the word for any friendly service granted to us. Reading is what I want most of all and if you could stretch a point and include some sewing materials that would mean a little more sunshine. My 5-year-old boy likes story and picture books." Mrs. Moore's husband has a job and they are buying a little four-room house, but it takes almost all the cash to make the payments.

8. It has been some time since I have heard from the CHEERFUL LETTER friends, so I decided to send along a letter. Thought you would like to share our bad luck, the burning of our feed barn. This fire set us back—an awful loss. However, we'll manage to get along some way but if any of our friends wish to cheer us up in a CHEERFUL LETTER way it sure will help. Some knitting materials and quilt pieces, and reading for two boys, ages 11 and 7, will make us feel that somebody is interested. Mrs. Dovie Ingram, Bassetts, Va.

9. I have been reading one of your CHEERFUL LETTER MAGAZINES and find it very enjoyable. Life gets pretty lonely here in the mountains with us and we wonder if it will be possible to add our name to your list of those wishing to be cheered by your Society. We have five children, two boys, ages 11 and 25, and three girls, ages 7, 9, and 24. Reading and sewing material will be right welcome. Mrs. Roscoe Ogle, Crabtree, Ark.

10. From the mountains of Virginia comes this appeal for quilt scraps, and reading material for a boy of 14. "I look forward to a membership in the Exchange," writes Mrs. Mintie Trivitt, Konnarock, Va.

11. I am a young married woman with one little girl. We are terribly lonely and hearing from some of the CHEERFUL LETTER friends will brighten our dull life. My baby is just a year old and would someone please send something to amuse her. Any kind of reading would satisfy me. Mrs. Gertrude Bass, Peachland, N. C.

12. My husband passed away the first of the year, leaving me with two small boys, ages 2 and 4, and sometime this

month there will be an addition to my family. My boys could make good use of some story-books and picture cards. We live so far from a church that it is impossible to ever attend a service, and wherever the Bible is taught I would like to go. Some talcum powder, pins and soap would help out just at this time. Mrs. Gladys Cox, R. 2, Hixson, Tenn.

13. Mrs. Della Hall, R. 2, Ferrum, Va., sends word that her husband has been taken away to Camp Lee. There are five children in the family; boys, ages 12, 14 and 16; girls, 7 and 10. Reading for all would help so much, together with quilt scraps and the thread for sewing them.

14. I am a lonely woman living on a farm. My health is very poor and I have the care of five children, two boys, ages 6 months and 13; and three girls, ages 3, 8, and 16. Any old pieces for quilt making would be acceptable and please don't forget the children. Mrs. Robert Maxey, Rock Springs, Ark.

15. Mrs. Frank High, Peachland, N. C., was left a widow a year ago with six children to raise; 3 girls and 3 boys. All the children are in school but two. School material would come in handy or any sewing materials. Mrs. High signs herself, "A lonely widow."

NOTICE TO MINISTERS

Will any Minister who receives this paper cooperate with this Department by sending names of lonely people living in places remote from schools, libraries and churches, young people without means of education, and invalids, young or old? Our friendly service is offered to any who are interested.

Be steady and quiet. Be a man.

Fear can only do you harm.

—Poole.

Life is not a matter of being popular, but of being congenial.

It isn't your *position* that makes you happy or unhappy. It's your *disposition*.

A LOYAL LEADER

The work of the CHEERFUL LETTER Exchange has for nine years been carried on under the guidance of Mrs. Mabelle H. Stevens, whose enthusiasm and gracious friendliness has been an inspiration to all who have been associated with her. Before accepting this chairmanship in 1928 she had served eight years as library chairman, and in reporting on this work said: "I am entering into my work with the head and the heart and the will and the plan," and it is with this spirit that she has led the CHEERFUL LETTER Exchange to even greater achievement. Through her untiring efforts and the co-operation of her sub-committee, the work of the Exchange has been so systematized that the CHEERFUL LETTER Department is a veritable power house from which living streams of joy, comfort and inspiration are distributed to lonely and isolated souls in all parts of the country.

The monthly conferences presided over by Mrs. Stevens have been so full to overflowing with interesting reports and ideas that one hour and a half was all too short. It is only by attending these conferences that the magnitude of this work and its far-reaching influence can be realized. There one hears reports of the many libraries established in out-of-the-way places, the underprivileged children helped by the home-study department, the meager district schools whose struggles for existence are strengthened by the help of their adopted Mother-Alliances and letters from lonely souls who have found friends whose sympathetic interest brings brightness into their otherwise drab lives.

No committee in our Alliance or in the American Unitarian Association itself more truly typifies the spirit of our faith, "The Fatherhood of God, the brotherhood of man, and the progress of mankind onward and upward forever," and we would pay loving tribute to the one who has given so generously of her time and of herself to enlarge the power of this truly Unitarian work, our Mrs. Mabelle H. Stevens, a friend to all.—*The Christian Register*.

GIFT OF CORN DAY

On an early spring day, in 1621, the settlers at Plymouth, Mass., were startled to hear a voice say, "Welcome, Englishmen!" Looking up from their work they saw an Indian with arms outstretched, standing at the end of the village street. The colonists were greatly surprised, for they did not suppose that any Indian of that region could speak English. The Indian, whose name was Samoset, had been to another settlement and had there learned a limited amount of English. The English treated him so well that the following day he brought another Indian, name Squanto, who could talk intelligently with the settlers. The latter, also well pleased with his reception, asked the colonists to allow his chief, Massasoit, to visit them, as this chief was anxious to make friends with the new colonists.

The settlers owed their very lives to Squanto that year. After he had arranged a meeting between Chief Massasoit and the settlers, at which the pipe of peace was smoked and an agreement made that they would be friends, Squanto came frequently to the village, and taught the settlers how to hunt game, trap small animals, and showed them the best places to fish.

The previous winter had been a very hard one, because the settlers had never before experienced such bitter cold as they found in this new country. Their stock of provisions had run so low that small rations were given to each family. What would become of the colony was a question, for everybody felt that it could not survive another such winter.

Squanto suggested that they plant corn, but their only stock of corn was what they had purchased from the friendly Indians; so Squanto offered to take them to the camp of Chief Massasoit to see if corn could be obtained.

About the twentieth of June, 1621, Edward Winslow and Stephen Hopkins, guided by Squanto, left Plymouth, and two days later they were in conference with Massasoit. The latter was very glad to assist his newly made friends, and he

loaded baskets with corn and sent Indian youths to carry them for the white men. They set out on the return journey on June 23, and when they entered the village two days later the settlers were amazed at the generosity of Massasoit. There was not only corn enough for planting but for food aplenty until the newly grown corn could be harvested.

Squanto stayed with the settlers and showed them the best way to plant corn—a certain number of kernels in a hill and two fish in each for fertilizer. He also came at intervals and showed them how to hill up the corn and protect the tender stalks from blackbirds and crows.

Thus June 23 meant much to those Plymouth settlers, and each year the day was celebrated as "Gift of Corn Day." Not being acquainted with corn, they did not even know how to prepare it to eat until the Indians showed them how to pound and grind it and make such dishes as hominy, pone, supawn, samp, and succotash—all these names being of Indian origin. So, on each twenty-third of June the people offered thanks for the survival of the colony, and the chief and other Indians were invited to feast and take part in the games and sports that were held in the afternoon. This celebration was continued for several years, and then it was supplanted by a greater celebration in the fall, that of Thanksgiving, on which day corn dishes were always placed on the table and reference made to the kindness of Squanto and Massasoit during that first spring and summer.—*Selected.*

THE LOST OPPORTUNITY

It lay on the busy highway,
A gift of my Lord and King,
The blessed opportunity
To do a Christ-like thing.

Ah me! while I hesitated
To stoop, lest men should see,
Another grasped and bore away
The gift God meant for me.

From "My Garden"

by ELIZABETH N. BROWN.

THE SUBTLE BEAUTY OF SUMMER SHADOWS

Shadows are commonly associated with gloom, discouragement, unhappiness and trouble. But to one working in the blaze of the hot summer, they are a most welcome relief. They soften the meteor eyes of the sanguine sun, they tone down the glare of mid-day, they announce the approach of evening, and they unroll to usher in each new day.

Artists and photographers know just how much shadows enhance the beauty of summer. They girdle the moon with pearl, and crown each morning and evening with a million colored bows. They pave the earth with strips of fallen sky.

Absolutely pure air would be colorless. The heavens are so blue and beautiful, because they are shadowed by tiny mirrors in the air that act as prisms and break the sunbeams into countless hues.

Likewise the exquisite color of the ocean, lakes, springs and rivers hints of shadows as the secret of its beauty. If the waters in the earth were absolutely pure they would be without tints or shades of any kind. Because they are shadowed by various particles, they lock the sunbeams in each sparkling wave and gem the earth with glory gleams.

Much the same thing is true of landscapes. If these were in solid and unchanging colors, they would appear as parched and scorched as a burnt carpet. Only because they are fleeced and flecked by shadows do the fields and hillsides bask in a variegated beauty of their own.

Not the least ministry of the trees is the shadows they cast. Trees appear very aged, when they stand in skeleton form against the sky. But their leaves give them a touch of immortal youth, as they reach forth to greet the air and to reflect and soften the driving, scorching light into softer shades and quieter tones. Without the play of the goodly summer shadows, the earth would be as hot and arid as a desert.

One hardly needs to point the parable of summer shadows. There are few human lives into which some shadows do not

enter. Sometimes they appear in the form of treadmill drudgery that clips the wings of the spirit. Again they may come in the form of disappointment, failure, or some besetting weakness. There is hardly a human pathway that has complete sunshine all the way, and it would not be well if it did.

The shadows of human life, even as those of summer, are goodly shadows. More often than not they condition and make possible a higher beauty within the heart. Not in spite of shadows, but because of them, are many made strong both to do and to endure.—*Minneapolis Journal*.

RUSSIA IN THE MONTH OF WHITE NIGHTS

I remember—apropos of the music of Rimsky-Korsakoff—a day spent in ancient Novgorod in the same season. The old walled city was sound asleep when we entered it, but it lay in dazzling sunlight, for this was in June, the month of the white nights in that part of Russia. At six o'clock the sun was as high in the sky as if it were eleven, and the town slept.

We crossed the bridge that bestrides one branch of the Volkova River, the river which flows out of Lake Ilmen near by and is made of the tears of the *Princess Volkova*, daughter of the *Sea King*, who loved Sadko, the brave minstrel of Novgorod. Below the banks of the stream were crowded with boats, old craft, some of them with the heads and necks of birds for prow. Under that dazzling sunshine there was no sound but the quacking of ducks and a distant hammering. . . .

As we sat, enchanted, a scene was enacted for all the world as if we had entered a theatre, or were witnessing a spectacle arranged for a credulous traveler's benefit. Indeed, it could not have been better planned or timed if all Russia had been waiting upon us. It was simply this: one of the old boats with a bird-head was towed round the bend by two men who marched on the footpath below us, heads down, speechless, and with ropes over their shoulders—men

who passed in an instant, hauling that barge, like figments of a dream—fortunately *not* singing the Volga Boat-song!

We were speechless, Igor Gleboff and I. Later we came back to that bank, a mud wall which had once been a defence against Tartar invasions. It was later afternoon. Boys and girls were at play. A man washed himself and his horse in the stream. Women with wooden yokes over their shoulders carried buckets of water in an endless procession to a garden in back of the dike, where they were growing cabbages. A big flat-boat, rowed by peasant women, with live ducks and other fowl in it, passed by. Then the evening came. I fell asleep. When I awoke the people had disappeared. Marsh birds had circled about in the dusk, and finally, from behind and about us and places far on the other side of the overflowing river, bells began to ring—deep, immense bells, smaller ones of all sizes, their sonorities mingling in the sky that overspread a landscape of old huts, churches, convents, marshes, white birches, and the great river.

I remember all this very distinctly, and remember no less clearly how, as I looked, melodies of Rimsky-Korsakoff, Borodin, Tchaikovsky came back to me. Very suddenly I realized how truly those melodies of the composers of the older school had grown like trees from this Russian land before me.—From "Symphonic Broadcasts," by OLIN DOWNES.

TODAY

Today is here, and so are we,
Let's live it well and ardently.
Each problem meet as best we can,
And for tomorrow wisely plan.

No one can live without a share
Of disappointment, worry, care;
We can but do the best we know,
And living thus, our spirits grow.

So many things o'er which we fret
Are difficulties never met.

We're here for such a little while.
Let's try to meet life with a smile!

G. V. HASTINGS.

A WALKING SPONGE

Says Dr. E. E. Free in *Week's Science*:

A kind of sponge hitherto unknown to science is able to creep from place to place in search of food, instead of sitting still forever as other sponges do.

It has appeared mysteriously in the tanks of sea-water in the London Aquarium.

"Last summer keepers in the Aquarium noticed these unknown sponges growing here and there in the tanks and pipes. The keepers also reported that these sponges could creep slowly over the walls or bottoms of the tanks, or even through the pipes, usually moving from a place where the sea-water was poor in food materials to another place where food was plentiful.

"This was ridiculed by the scientists, since the universal habit of the sponge animals is to fasten themselves permanently to some spot on the ocean bottom, and never to leave it until they die, food being obtained by a continual current of sea-water in and out of tube-like passages which penetrate the sponge's body. In spite of this skepticism, however, living specimens of the new sponge were collected and submitted to Mr. Maurice Burton, sponge expert of the British Museum. This naturalist now reports that the keepers are correct. The sponges do creep slowly from a foodless spot to one where the supplies of provender are greater.

"Mr. Burton also can find no sponge of this kind among those previously captured by scientists. It is not considered likely that the new sponge originated in the tanks. Instead it is believed to belong to some oceanic species which merely happens not to have been collected before. Presumably one or more small individuals of this species got into the tanks unnoticed with the sea-water, and have multiplied."

—*Literary Digest.*

What a man does for the love of God,
he does differently.

—*Wilfred T. Grenfell.*

WITH OUR BOYS AND GIRLS

BUNTINGS OF THE STORM

By MARGARET S. BRIDGE

Rain! Not since the opening of camp had it poured so. And wind, too! which drove the rain in sheets across the porch of the Recreation Hall, so that the Bird Lady had to move inside. It had slackened a bit when she looked up from her book in answer to Baldy's, "See what I found." The boy stood before her in his bare feet. He wore a poncho dripping with water from the downpour.

"Why, you know what that is," said the Bird Lady as she lifted the limp, wet body of a lustrous blue—or was it green—bird from his hand.

"Sure, that's an indigo bunting. Remember the one you showed me high up in a tree down by the gate?"

"I could never forget him. He was matchless, singing his throat out, and with the sunlight playing upon his rich plumage making it look like changeable silk."

"And now! Seemed sky-blue, green, purple and in some places black.—But what's this one?" he asked as he offered her an olive-brown bird about the size of a sparrow.

She examined it in an attempt to discover some mark of identification. "We'll have to consult the Bird-book, but where did you find these two birds?"

"Over by the pump-house. I saw them fighting. Guess they killed each other."

"What makes you think they killed each other?"

"You ought to have seen them! Whew! the way they flew at each other. Sometimes they'd miss and fly right up against the pump-house, up close to where the roof sticks out."

"I think it is more likely that they were blinded and whipped into utter exhaustion by the storm." Then, still puzzling over the brown bird in her hand, she suggested, "If you'll please bring the Bird-book we'll try to find out what this is. Possibly, it's the mother bunting.—Here's a description of her," she continued after Baldy had brought the book

from the shelves. "Sure enough, that's what it is."

"How do you know?" asked the boy, leaning over her shoulder to follow the description.

"Here's the sure proof. See that bluish tinge on the wings and tail?"

"Yes. She doesn't look much like her mate, does she?"

"Not much, but if she had brilliant blue feathers she would be too easily discovered when sitting upon her nest in the bushes near the ground."

"Do you suppose there are any baby birds, now?" Baldy asked with much concern.

"I hope not, but this is June 15, just about the time buntings are brooding here in northern Illinois and if there are no birdlings I am afraid there may be three or four pale bluish eggs that will never hatch, in a little nest of grass, bits of leaves, bark and hair."

"Too bad!" said the boy. "And now what do you think I should do with the old birds, bury them?"

"I wish instead of burying them you would give them to me, after all the boys in camp have had a chance to see them."

"Sure, you can have them, but what will you do with dead birds?"

"Send them to a taxidermist for stuffing and mounting. Then next winter when I give my bird lectures in the city, I can carry them in my case and tell their story to other boys and girls."

"Gee, do you give lectures?—but I think it's more fun to learn about birds outdoors."

"I do, too; the lectures, however, help get us ready for the experience outdoors where we can have the delight not only of seeing the bird, but of hearing its merry song." Then puckering up her lips, she imitated the most common notes in the repertoire of the indigo bunting. "That," she said, "is the best I can do for children who do not learn to know the bird in the woods."

"Pretty good!" he exclaimed with unmistakable admiration.—*The Beacon*.

LUCKY LOU'S GO-TO-MEETING HAT

By MAY JUSTUS

Her real name was Lockie Lou, but all the other children called her Lucky Lou, for several very good reasons. She was lucky in finding the ripest blackberries, the biggest hickory nuts, and the sweetest persimmons on the mountain. She was also lucky in school, never having the least trouble in remembering hard words or the multiplication tables. In fact, she was considered so fortunate that many another child was often heard to sigh: "I wish I were Lucky Lou Ogelvie!"

There came a time, however, when Lucky Lou considered herself the most unlucky and most unhappy little girl on Pine Mountain. Most of the other girls in school were talking of ordering new spring hats out of a big catalog which had been sent to their families in the mail. Abbie Cotter, the storekeeper's daughter, brought her catalog to school and pointed with pride to the rose-crowned hat that was to be hers. The other little girls had chosen hats, too, and great excitement reigned in school all that week.

"Which hat are you going to get, Lucky Lou?" they asked.

But Lucky Lou shook her head. She did not want to tell them there was not enough money at home to buy her a hat out of the big catalog. Her mother was having a hard time, just now, to keep bread enough to eat with the milk they had from their one cow. But the other girls tried to make her talk.

"Aren't you going to have a go-to-meeting hat this year?" they asked. But again Lucky Lou shook her head. They might think what they liked, but she would tell them nothing. But it was hard to think that she could not have a go-to-meeting hat herself. Now she would have to wear her old sunbonnet which had become very faded-looking from many washings. One of the strings was lost, and there was a hole in the crown where she had torn it on a limb while hunting wood.

As the day for Big Meeting drew near she became more unhappy. And the day before it was to be, she went to her mother and said: "Mother, may I go bareheaded

to Big Meeting tomorrow? I would rather go bareheaded than to wear my old sunbonnet."

"You are going to have a new hat, if you will help me make it," said her mother.

"Oh, yes!" cried the little girl. "But how can I?"

"Go to the barn," said her mother, "and bring me a big lapful of corn shucks."

Lucky Lou wondered greatly, but she obeyed, and was soon back with the corn shucks.

"Now, tear them apart," bade her mother, "and pick out the inside ones that are very white and soft and fine."

When this was done, her mother put them into a pan and poured boiling water on them. After they had soaked a little while she dipped them out, and let them drain.

"Now," she said to Lucky, "we are ready to go on." She showed the little girl how to split the shucks into fine strips and braid them smoothly. Then she took a needle and thread and began to sew.

Around and around she sewed the braided pieces just as one sews a braided rug. After a while she began to shape the little mat to fit Lucky's head. She sewed very fast, and the little girl had to keep busy to supply the braids as fast as they were needed. After a few hours, the hat was big enough, and it fitted Lucky's curly head quite nicely.

"It is a nice hat," said the little girl, "and O Mother! If we only had a few flowers for it! All the other girls' hats have flowers."

Her mother went upstairs and brought down a big bunch of straw flowers which had grown in their own garden. They were dry now, but this kind of flower keeps its shape and its colors always.

"We will make a little wreath of these," said the mother. Lucky Lou broke off the stems, and her mother sewed a row of flowers all around the edge of the hat. How pretty they looked! Lucky Lou was delighted.

And next day at Big Meeting all the other girls said so, too!—*The Beacon*.

CHEERFUL LETTER SUBSCRIPTIONS

The May number of the CHEERFUL LETTER MAGAZINE began a new fiscal year. It will be a great favor if those who intend to renew their subscriptions will do so during the month of June without waiting for the customary notice. Possibly there is some shut-in on your list who would enjoy the magazine each month. The subscription price is 50c per year and check or money should be sent to the CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass.

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To cheer and comfort those who are ill, lonely, or discouraged, and to give to those living far from a church some of the inspiration of the printed word by the publication of one good sermon, or similar article in each issue of the *Cheerful Letter Magazine*. Only such simple religious truths and principles as are agreed upon by all churches are printed.

To help those who live far from schools, or who wish to continue their studies by means of correspondence with a teacher.

To establish Circulating Libraries in isolated communities, schools, and colleges in rural and mountain districts where public libraries and other educational privileges are not available.

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